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LETTER DATED 4 SEPTEMBER 1992 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a letter dated 4 September 1992 from Mr. Mohammed Said al-Sahaf addressed to you concerning the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme in Iraq.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samir K. K. AL-NIMA
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Letter dated 4 September 1992 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council

With reference to your note of 2 September 1992, concerning the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme in Iraq, and your letter dated 24 August 1992 to the Secretary-General on the same subject, I should like to inform you and the members of the Security Council of the following facts:

Firstly, Iraq was fully prepared to conclude a new agreement with Mr. Jan Eliasson, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, which was consistent with the actual amount of emergency civilian assistance that the United Nations could provide to Iraq under the joint programme of the United Nations specialized agencies represented at Baghdad.

It is important that the actual amount of this programme, as reflected in the figures supplied by the delegation from the United Nations Secretariat, be made known so that everyone has a clear picture of the situation. The target figure for programme resources is $116,668,119.

In fact, actual commitments to date total only $12,866,675.

As you can see, then, a political and media campaign has been orchestrated by representatives of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France in connection with what they refer to as the Humanitarian Assistance Programme for Iraq. Yet, this programme, allegedly designed to meet the emergency humanitarian needs of the Iraqi population, more than 18 million people, all of whom have been suffering from an unjust embargo for more than two years, has an actual budget of less than $13 million and a target budget, which is pure fiction, of under $117 million.

Nevertheless, in the course of our negotiations with Mr. Jan Eliasson during his visit to Baghdad from 17 to 21 August 1992, we suggested to him and to the delegation that accompanied him that a practical, dynamic programme for the provision of civilian assistance to Iraq which corresponded to the actual budget should be drawn up and that Iraq's priority needs should be identified jointly. We also put forward a number of practical proposals with a view to concluding a new agreement and implementing it.

We proposed that the competent Iraqi authorities should work with the specialized agencies of the United Nations and the Coordinator of the United Nations Programme to adapting the Programme to needs, in accordance with the priorities set by both parties, and that assistance should cover the following areas: food, medical care, treatment of drinking water, sanitation, education, social services and agriculture. We reiterated Iraq's readiness to ensure that those responsible for implementing the assistance programme had free access to operation sites. Furthermore, the Iraqi side, which is the

beneficiary of the assistance programme, would provide all necessary facilities in the field, namely: administration, housing, telecommunications links and security services in areas scheduled to receive assistance. This would be done throughout the course of operations in the various Governorates, after which programme staff would return to Baghdad.

We also agreed with Mr. Eliasson and his delegation that non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to participate in the implementation of assistance programmes provided for in the plan of work to be drawn up jointly by Iraq and the United Nations. The participation of each organization would be worked out in close collaboration with the United Nations, under the terms of collaboration existing between the United Nations and the non-governmental organization concerned and on the basis of the agreement to be concluded between the competent Iraqi authorities and the non-governmental organization in question. With regard to the presence of United Nations Guards in Iraq, we reminded Mr. Eliasson how the question had arisen, noting that the conditions which had prevailed over a year ago had changed, that life had returned to normal throughout the country and that, consequently, the presence of the Guards was no longer necessary. Moreover, the Iraqi authorities have responsibility for the safety and protection of the property of staff of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, except in certain areas of northern Iraq where there is no official Iraqi administration.

Notwithstanding the irrefutable evidence and facts presented to Mr. Eliasson, we accepted in principle the presence of 150 Guards in the northern areas of Iraq, where there is currently no official Iraqi administration, and four or five Guards at Programme headquarters in Baghdad.

Mr. President,

Any observer not motivated by political considerations must recognize the spirit of objectivity and cooperation which prevailed in the course of our efforts with Mr. Eliasson to reach a new agreement that would allow implementation of the assistance programme for Iraq to begin promptly and ensure that all necessary facilities were provided in a measure consistent with the magnitude of such assistance.

We reiterated to Mr. Eliasson that the door remained open to consultations between the two parties with a view to the conclusion of a new agreement, in keeping with the practical and realistic principle which we expressed to him. We also told him that we hoped he would take into consideration the important observations made by Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister, at their meeting on 21 August 1992, particularly with regard to the need to lift the unfair and illegitimate embargo imposed on the Iraqi people and Iraq's fully justified concern at the plans for an attack on the Iraqi people which the United States, the United Kingdom and France were concocting on specious grounds.

Secondly, your note of 2 September 1992 contains unclear and incorrect remarks concerning the safety of United Nations staff in Iraq. Accordingly, it would be useful to state the following:

Iraq assumes full responsibility for the safety of United Nations staff. This being said, security measures can only be effective if the movements of United Nations staff are closely coordinated with the competent Iraqi authorities. We explained this to Mr. Eliasson. Some in the United Nations, however, rejected this idea, arguing the need for free access. In practice, this means that United Nations personnel may move about anywhere without advising the competent Iraqi authorities. Yet how can their safety be ensured under these circumstances?

The Iraqi Government rejects all direct or indirect accusations made in the wake of threats made against United Nations personnel in the northern region. It is in fact the United States, the United Kingdom and France which control this region. Having styled themselves the protectors of the region, these countries seek simultaneously to evade their responsibility when incidents occur there: even as they use force to prevent the legitimate Iraqi authorities from being present in the region, they hold Iraq responsible for actions taken against United Nations staff there.

This position is all the more tendentious because we had warned the United Nations officials in charge that some parties loyal to the Western countries, together with officials of the Iranian regime and elements belonging to the armed Kurd groups protected by the three countries in question, sought to cause problems with the United Nations staff for the purpose of tarnishing Iraq's image and justifying the conspiracies against Iraq. Moreover, whenever the Iraqi authorities took steps to institute security and stability in the country, the Western countries opposed those steps and created disorder and anarchy. This was so in the north in the past and is now true of the south, where they have imposed an exclusion zone below the 32nd parallel, even though Iraqi aircraft confine themselves to reconnaisance operations, aimed at preventing infiltrations into Iraq from Iranian territory, and routine training exercises.

Mr. President, Iraqi citizens clearly feel resentment towards the United Nations staff, but nothing personal is meant. It is simply that the Iraqi people have had enough of the double standard and the iniquitous resolutions which are imposed on them in the name of the United Nations and an international pseudo-legality. The Iraqi people will feel well-disposed again only if the United Nations treats them in accordance with the principles of justice and equity under a true international legal order by lifting the embargo and desisting from attacks on their dignity and interventions into the internal affairs of their country.

I urge you to display justice and equity and to oppose those who, prompted by suspect political intentions, are seeking to misrepresent the facts and to provoke artificial crises by invoking fallacious humanitarian reasons with a view to again placing Iraq and its dignified and valorous people in the wrong.

What we are seeking from all the impartial members of the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat is the lifting, in accordance with

the principles of law, justice and equity, of the unlawful, unjust and inhuman embargo to which all the Iraqi people have been subjected for the past two years.

Moreover, we have proposed that the programme of assistance, although modest, should be implemented on objective and practical terms that can ensure its success. But all who have ulterior political motives have engaged in obstructive behaviour and have prevented us from reaching agreement with Mr. Eliasson on the subject. Yet, all will not be lost if the current programme can, through cooperation between the two parties, be made to yield specific results.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq